

36297/C/1

INSTRUCTIONS FOR VACCINE INOCULATION.

LET the vaccine fluid be taken, for the purpose of Inoculation, from a pustule that is making its progress regularly, and which possesses the true vaccine character, on any day from the fifth to the eighth, or even a day or two later, provided the efflorescence be not then formed around it. When the efflorescence is formed, it is always most prudent to desist from taking any more of the virus from that pustule.

To obtain the virus, let the edges of the pustule be gently punctured with a lancet in several points. It will gradually ooze out, and should be inserted upon the arm about midway between the shoulder and the elbow, either by means of a very slight scratch, not exceeding the eighth part of an inch, or a very small oblique puncture.

A little red spot will appear on the punctured part on the third day, if the operation succeed, which on the fourth or fifth becomes perceptibly vesicated. It goes on increasing till the tenth day, when it is generally surrounded by a rose-coloured efflorescence, which remains nearly stationary for a day or two. The efflorescence then fades away, and the pustule is gradually converted into a hard glossy scab, of a dark mahogany colour. These progressive stages of the pustule are commonly completed in sixteen or seventeen days.

A single pustule is sufficient to secure the constitution from the small-pox; but as we are not always certain the puncture may take effect, it will be prudent to inoculate in both arms, or to make two punctures in the same arm, about an inch and a half asunder, except in very early infancy, when there is a great susceptibility of local irritation.

If the efflorescence surrounding the pustule should be extensive, and occasion much local heat upon the arm, it may be cooled by the repeated application of pieces of folded linen dipped in cold water; or still more expeditiously by a strong solution of the *aqua lythargyri acetati** in water; an ounce, for example, of the former in five or six of the latter.

If the scab should at any time be prematurely rubbed off, and not succeeded by another within twenty-four hours, the part may be occasionally touched with the undiluted *aqua lythargyri acetati*.

Vaccine virus, taken from a pustule, and inserted immediately in its fluid state, is preferable to that which has been previously dried; but as it is not always practicable to obtain it in this state, we are compelled to seek for some mode of preserving it. Various means have been suggested, but from the test of long experience it may be asserted, that preserving it between two plates of glass is the most eligible. Let a piece of common window glass be cut into squares of about an inch each, so that they shall lie smooth when placed upon each other. Let the collected vaccine fluid be confined to a small spot (about the size of a split pea) upon the centre of one of these glasses; which should be suffered to dry in the common heat of the atmosphere, without exposure to the heat of fire or the sun. When dry, it should be immediately secured by placing over it the other piece of glass. Nothing more is necessary for its preservation than wrapping it in clean writing paper.

The virus, thus preserved, when wanted for the purpose of inoculation, may easily be restored to its fluid state by dissolving it in a small portion of cold water, taken up on the point of a lancet. It may then be used in the same manner as when just taken from a pustule.

The vaccine fluid is liable, from causes apparently trifling, to undergo a decomposition. In this state it sometimes produces what has been denominated the spurious pustule; that is, a pustule, or an appearance on the arm not possessing the characteristic marks of the genuine pustule. Anomalies, assuming different forms, may be excited, according to the qualities of the virus applied, or the state of the person inoculated; but by far the most frequent variety, or deviation from the perfect pustule, is that which arrives at maturity, and finishes its progress much within the time limited by the true. Its commencement is marked by a troublesome itching; and it throws out a premature efflorescence, sometimes extensive, but seldom circumscribed, or of so vivid a tint as that which surrounds the pustule completely organized; and (which is more characteristic of its degeneracy than the other symptoms) it appears more like a common festering produced by a thorn, or any other small extraneous body sticking in the skin, than a pustule excited by the vaccine virus. It is generally of a straw colour; and when punctured, instead of that colourless, transparent fluid of the perfect pustule, its contents are found to be opaque. That deviation from the common character of the pustule, arising from vaccine virus which has been previously exposed to a degree of heat capable of decomposing it, is very different. In this instance, it begins with a creeping scab, of a pale brown or amber colour; making a long and slow progress, and sometimes going through its course without any perceptible efflorescence. Its edges are commonly elevated, and afford, on being punctured, a limpid fluid.

A little practice in vaccine inoculation, attentively conducted, impresses on the mind the perfect character of the vaccine pustule; therefore, when a deviation arises, of whatever kind it may be, common prudence points out the necessity of re-inoculation, first, with vaccine virus of the most active kind, and secondly, should this be ineffectual, with variolous virus. But if the constitution shews an insusceptibility of one, it commonly does of the other.

When any constitutional symptoms occur in inoculated Cow-pox, they are commonly first perceptible (especially in children) on the fourth or fifth day. They appear again, and sometimes in adults, not unlike a mild attack from inoculated small-pox, on the eighth, ninth, or tenth day. The former arise from the general effects of the virus on the habit, the latter from the irritation of the pustule.

If the effluvia of the small-pox have been received into the habit previously to the inoculation of the vaccine virus, the vaccine inoculation will not always be found to stop its progress, although the pustule may make its advances without interruption.

The lancet used for inoculation should always be perfectly clean. After each puncture, it is proper to dip it into water, and wipe it dry. The Practitioner should be particularly cautious in observing that its point be free from rust, either contracted by common means, or from the action of the vaccine virus, which, even when dry and in contact with it, has a tendency, in a little time, to produce it.

The preservation of vaccine virus upon a lancet, beyond the period of a few days, should never be attempted; ~~as it is so~~
~~prone to become dry, which will render it~~

* Goulard's extract of saturn.

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